

## **Frequent Questions Submitted to the NH Board of Psychologists FAQs**

**Please refer to the following link provided to answer many of the questions that are submitted to the NH Board of Psychologist:**

<http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rules/stateagencies/mhp.html>

<http://www.nh.gov/psychology/documents/rules.pdf>

<http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/ras/html/NHTOC/NHTOC-XXX-329-B.htm>

**If a psychologist has questions about a potential complaint against them, can he/she contact the NH Board of Psychologists for questions or consultation?**

No, do not contact any member for the NH Board of Psychologists as none of the members can advise or opine at any time. Jean Barnes is the administrator for the NH Board of Psychologists. She can be reached at [jean.barnes@nh.gov](mailto:jean.barnes@nh.gov) for questions that are not addressed here via the FAQs.

Contact with the NH Psychological Association is an option as a licensed psychologist.

**How quickly can I expect a response to a question I have from the NH Board of Psychologists?**

Jean Barnes is the administrator for the NH Board of Psychologists. She can be reached at [jean.barnes@nh.gov](mailto:jean.barnes@nh.gov) for questions that are not addressed here via the FAQs.

Ms. Barnes collects questions and comments and then passes them to the members of the Board at their monthly meetings. *Ms. Barnes cannot answer questions which the Board members have been tasked to address and one can expect to wait until the next monthly Board meeting is to be expected.*

Dates and times for Board meetings are posted on the website.

***Please note that the FAQs are provided to answer common/frequently asked questions.***

**Is there a form needed to file an allegation of complaint before the Board of Psychologists?**

Yes, a form can be obtained here at the Board's website or by contacting Jean Barnes at [jean.barnes@nh.gov](mailto:jean.barnes@nh.gov)

**Where should I mail my application and fees or any change of address notification?**

No. NH Law has a list of accrediting institutions, to any of which you can make this request. The Board however has no authority to accredit continuing education events; it can only approve (or reject) applications for license renewals on the basis of NH Law.

[http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rules/state\\_agencies/mhp400.html](http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rules/state_agencies/mhp400.html)

**If I have extra CE credits (e.g. 50 for the current 2 years), can the overage be applied and carry over to my next 2-year license cycle?**

Unfortunately, no. Any CE credits above and beyond the required 40 per 2 years with 6 CEs in Ethics cannot be applied to your next 2-year license cycle. All licensed psychologists start at zero (0) CEs at the beginning of their new 2 year cycle.

**If a psychologist is licensed in another state or province, can they practice in New Hampshire prior to obtaining a NH license?**

Under RSA 329-B:20 – NH Law provides for a Temporary and Emergency Applicants From Other States.

**Who may use the title, “psychologist,” in the State of New Hampshire?**

Anyone who is licensed by the NH Board of Psychologists, (i.e., Licensed Psychologists,) may refer to him/herself as a psychologist. Applicants before the Board may also do so. In addition, individuals who hold graduate degrees in psychology and are exempt from licensure, such as university professors teaching psychology, researchers in psychology, industrial/organizational psychologists, and school psychologists employed by boards of education, among others, can properly use the title, “psychologist.”

**Does the public have access to a licensed psychologist's personal information such as a home address?**

No, but take note. The Board of Psychologists is *required* to provide an address of record for all licensed psychologists. If the psychologist has chosen to use his or her home address as their address of record, this is the address that will be given to anyone who calls to verify their license. Therefore, if you do not want your home address disclosed, you may obtain and use an alternate address such as a business address or a post office box as your address of record.

**How many hours of continuing education do I need to accrue in order to renew my license?**

NH Regulations require that in order to renew a psychology license, the licensee must have accrued at least 40 hours of qualifying continuing education within the two year period immediately preceding the expiration date of the license.

If this is the psychologist's first renewal and his or her initial license was in effect for less than 24 months, the continuing education requirements are pro-rated, although the full six hours of ethics are required in either case.

**Do I have to take any specific courses to meet the board's continuing education requirements?**

Refer to the NH Laws. Licensed psychologists are required to have 40 hours of CEs with 6 hours of the CEs in Ethics every 2 years.

**Does the NH Board of Psychologists handle complaints involving psychologists who perform child custody evaluations?**

The NH Board of Psychologists is required to review and to make a determination on every consumer complaint received regardless of the subject matter of the complaint. Child custody cases in the Probate Court can be very contentious and volatile.

Frequently, at least one of the parties involved in such cases is displeased with the outcome of the court's decision regarding custody of children.

*Keep in mind that the Board of Psychology has no authority to change the findings and decision of a Probate Court judge regarding custody of children.*

What the Board is mandated to have each complaint against a psychologist who has provided an evaluation in a child custody case reviewed by an expert to determine whether the evaluation was conducted pursuant to the Code of Conduct and Ethical Principles and to the Guidelines for Child Custody Evaluations in Divorce Proceedings established by the American Psychological Association (APA). These guidelines establish the standard of care for the practice of psychology. The board must apply APA standards as the accepted standard of care in all enforcement policies and disciplinary case evaluations. Therefore, if a child custody evaluation is determined to have been conducted within this accepted standard of care, the Board of Psychology cannot take administrative action against the psychologist performing the evaluation. If it is determined that an evaluation was performed outside of this standard of care, then the board has the authority to continue with appropriate administrative action. Such action may include an intense educational review with the evaluating psychologist or formal administrative discipline against the psychologist's license depending on how extreme the departure from the standard of care was and on the amount of consumer harm that may have occurred as a result of the departure.

*The board's action will have no effect on the findings and decision of the Probate Court judge regarding the custody of the children involved in the case.*

**I am currently working on a graduate degree in psychology online through XYZ University and would like to find out what the requirements are for licensure. The program in which I am enrolled is not APA accredited. Will I be able to obtain a New Hampshire state license to practice psychology with a degree from this institution?**

The Board does not have the authority to approve, or disapprove, graduate training programs per se for licensure; it must evaluate each individual applicant's program after an individual formally applies for licensure. Therefore, no staff member of the Board or the Board itself is able to review your proposed program to determine, prior to

submission of an application, whether the program would meet requirements for licensure. While eligibility for licensure can sometimes be a complex question, the Board refers you to the requirements for licensure which are specified in the NH Regulations and Laws. Note: Residency requirements are explicit and potential applicants need to follow the regulations carefully.

<http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/html/NHTOC/NHTOC-XXX-329-B.htm>

[http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rules/state\\_agencies/mhp.html](http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rules/state_agencies/mhp.html)

### **What is the educational requirement to become licensed as a psychologist in New Hampshire?**

The Board's regulations require completion of a doctoral program that is either accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA) or meets APA accreditation standards.

Listings of accredited/designated doctoral programs can be found on the APA website ([www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org)).

### **What criminal offenses may prevent me from obtaining a license?**

You are required to report all criminal offenses to the Board. Each application will be evaluated on an individual basis.

### **What type of documentation do I need to submit in support of my application if I have a prior criminal record or licensure discipline?**

- If you have a criminal record, you must submit certified official court documents related to your criminal record, showing the date(s) and circumstance(s) surrounding your arrest(s)/conviction(s), sections of the law violated, and disposition of the case(s). Documents would normally consist of a complaint or Indictment, a judgment, a docket sheet, or other documents showing disposition of your case. Some courts refer to these documents as an order of probation. A court clerk must certify these court documents before we can accept them.
- If you have received discipline against any license that you have held, you must submit certified copies of the documents related to the disciplinary action taken. The documents must come from the agency that took the disciplinary action and must be certified by that agency.
- You must submit a detailed description of circumstances surrounding your criminal record or disciplinary action.

### **Do I have to report charges if I completed a period of probation and the charges were dismissed or closed?**

Yes. Offenses must be reported to the board even if you received a suspended imposition of sentence and the record is now considered closed.

**Can a person obtain a license if they have a misdemeanor or felony crime on their record?**

Each application is evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The board considers the nature, severity, and recency of offenses, as well as rehabilitation and other factors. The Board cannot make a determination for approval or denial of licensure without evaluating the entire application and supporting documentation.

**What crimes or license discipline must be reported on the application?**

All convictions, guilty pleas, and nolo contendere pleas must be reported, except for minor traffic violations not related to the use of drugs or alcohol. This includes misdemeanors, felonies, “driving while intoxicated (DWI)” and “driving under the influence (DUI).”

Crimes must be reported even if they are a suspended imposition of sentence. All prior disciplinary action against any other professional licenses must be reported, whether it occurred in New Hampshire or another state or territory.

**Am I required to send in evidence of my continuing competency hours at the time I renew?**

No. The Board will randomly select licensees for a post-renewal audit. If selected, you would be notified by mail that documentation is required and given a time frame within which to comply.

**Who maintains the required documents for verification of continuing competency hours?**

It is the responsibility of the individual psychologist to maintain the transcripts, certificates, and any other continuing competency forms, following the annual renewal period in which they were used. Do not send any forms or documents to the NH Board of Psychologists unless requested to do so.

**Are there Board forms that I need to use for documenting my compliance with the continued competency requirement?**

No. Should you be chosen in the random sampling, you would be asked to provide official transcripts or certificates of completion from approved providers.

**Is there a requirement for a course in ethics?**

Yes, a minimum of six hours (in each renewal period of two years) shall be in courses that emphasize the ethics, standards of practice or laws governing the profession of psychology in New Hampshire.

**What if I become ill or incapacitated and unable to complete my continuing competency requirements prior to renewal?**

Upon written request from the psychologist prior to the annual renewal date explaining the circumstances, the Board may grant an extension or exemption for all or part of the required hours.

**Can I find out if the Board has received any complaints on a licensee?**

Whether or not the Board has received a complaint on a particular individual or company is not public information. Therefore, we cannot confirm nor deny the existence of any complaint. One reason for this is that our investigators must first determine the validity of all complaints and determine if disciplinary action is warranted. For example, a person who is at odds with a licensee may submit numerous erroneous complaints just to harm an innocent licensee.

Therefore, only disciplinary action (i.e. notice of agency action, petition, surrender, order) taken against a licensee or an unlicensed individual or company engaged in a regulated profession is available for public review. You can determine if disciplinary action has occurred through our online license verification system.